



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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PSC Calls for Alternative Transmission Route Through Douglas County

MADISON – Today, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) issued an order calling on the American Transmission Company to provide alternative routes for the Douglas County portion of the Arrowhead-Weston transmission line within 30 days.

“The Commission has thoroughly reviewed the Arrowhead-Weston transmission line project two times and came to the same conclusion both times: the Arrowhead-Weston transmission line is critical to meeting the energy needs of the entire State of Wisconsin,” said PSC Chairperson Burnie Bridge. “We took this fairly unusual step of reopening the case on our own because we feel strongly about the need to move forward in constructing the transmission line for the reliability of our entire energy transmission network in the state.”

Earlier this month, the Douglas County Board of Supervisors voted to prohibit the County from negotiating with the American Transmission Company regarding the use of county-owned land. The approved route, which runs along an existing transmission corridor and existing railroad right-of-way on the Douglas County property, is the preferred route because it lowers the impact on private property owners and costs of the project.

“The Commission is compelled to take this action today to ensure that the Arrowhead-Weston transmission line is in service in 2008.” Commissioner Bert Garvin said. “Our decision today reflects our commitment to completing the construction of this critical addition to Wisconsin’s transmission system and ensuring system reliability for Wisconsin consumers.”

Commissioner Mark Meyer said, “Wisconsin’s energy demand is projected to grow at 2.5% each year. While conservation is part of the answer, we will also have to build new infrastructure to meet the increased need. Arrowhead-Weston is an important part of meeting that need.”

Today, the Commission reopened the Arrowhead-Weston transmission line docket for the sole purpose of considering alternative routes in Douglas County. The order does not reopen the Commission’s prior decisions where the Commission determined the transmission line is needed to solve transmission congestion problems, to ensure electric system reliability and to deliver electricity to meet the growing energy demands for Wisconsin’s citizens and businesses.

The Commission originally authorized construction of the 210-mile, 345 kilovolt transmission line linking the Arrowhead substation near Duluth, Minnesota, with the Weston substation near Wausau on October 30, 2001. It re-opened the case the following year to look at revised cost estimates for the project. On December 19, 2003, the Commission determined that the increased costs for construction of the project were reasonable and that there was still a critical need for the new transmission line.

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